

## The Christmas Pencil

### CHARACTERS

Holly Silverbell (RAINA) — Quirky writer moves to Christmas town to work on her new novel, but she hates Christmas and there's too much commotion and she can't concentrate ... she incidentally solves The Christmas Crime, an unsolved murder in the town

Dallas Dasher (FELIX) — Incredibly handsome everything a woman would want type of guy with a broad chest and he wears those quarter zip sweaters and he has veneers  
Barista / town crier / drummer boy / ski instructor

Mom (Mrs. Claus-Silverbell) (ALANA) — Mother who means well but wants her daughter to settle down with a nice man, she's not getting any younger after all ... "you know, you'd have an easier time finding a boyfriend if you liked christmas." She has to be right about everything

Dad (St. Nick Claus) (BRANSON) — her dad, secretly santa ... he keeps making allusions he's Santa Claus ... she was sad because her dad was never around for Christmas

Vixen Prancer (ALANA) — Holly's best friend, new mom who likes wine, owns a candy cane store

Riley The Christmas Dog (CHARLES) — Talking dog who appears at the very end to celebrate christmas somehow

Blitzen Comet (ANDREW) — Her boss

The Candy Cane Killer (ANDREW) — He's targeting spinsters in their 20s who fit the exact demographic profile of the main character

Rappin Santa (BRANSON) — Basically he's a rapping Santa.

[Sleigh bells are ring-ting-ting-a-ling as we pan over the picturesque Vermont town of Kringleville. It's December 23rd—"Pre-Christmas." That's what they call it here. Kringleville is nuts about Christmas—chestNUTS, that is. It's the biggest Christmas Town in America, at least since Tinsel Town changed its name to Hollywood. A young woman—not SO young, if you ask her mother (who's been so patient with her, by the way) —walks along the small town streets, nose deep in a book called 1001 Funny Jokes, as a car goes speeding by and blasts her with dirty, shitty water. She does the thing where she exhales air up at her bangs.]

HOLLY: [sigh] Yep. That's me. My name is Holly Silverbell—ironic for someone who *hates* Christmas. But you have to understand. I've got my reasons. Growing up, my father was always

absent during the holidays, the first time I got alcohol poisoning was because of eggnog, and my ex-boyfriend in New York City, well, let's just say that when I broke up with him, I broke up with Christmas too.

[She tosses her soggy book in a trash can and begins shopping for furniture on her phone. A man holds up a cup towards Holly. His clothes are just dirty enough that the audience watching at home understands he's a classic-style vagrant, no more no less.]

VAGRANT: Spare some change for Christmas, ma'am?

HOLLY: Sorry, no change. Humbug. I don't like Christmas, you see, because of my backstory—

[The Vagrant lurches forward right when she says "backstory" and throws up eggnog all over Holly's left boot.]

HOLLY: See, stuff like this keeps happening to me, and you'll have to excuse me if I'm not quite in the Christmas spirit. This holiday is the bane of my existence—and my hometown is obsessed with it! There's a Counter-Strike Christmas map based on this town for God's sake! Oh great, now here comes a reindeer. Will it ever end? Hey buddy, you lose your sleigh?

[The Reindeer approaches, covered in jingle bells or whatever, and it walks right up next to Holly and rips out a great big hardboiled-egg-and-warm-milk fart. The fart smells yellow and everyone goes cross-eyed. The Vagrant bends over and gingerly throws up on Holly's right boot.]

HOLLY: I bet you're wondering how I got into this mess. After I broke up with my boyfriend and lost my cushy opinion writing job at the New York Times, I hit a wall. I was so mad that I literally walked into a wall! When they hired me in December last year, my columns were the most-read on the entire site. But by the summer, my STUPID editor started to question the wisdom of writing incessant anti-Christmas op-eds in the middle of July. So without a job or a boyfriend, I had no choice but to move back to my tiny, STUPID town populated with MORONS. No one here has even heard of Vassar College. People here are so dumb they think the best Ivy League school is Brown—because it's the color of chestnuts roasting on an open fire. Anyway, I was running late to meet my childhood best friend, Vixen Prancer, at Jinglebell Coffee to catch up on old times.

[Holly walks into the town cafe, Jinglebell Coffee, and the inside is completely filled with Christmas decorations. There's a big tree, a life-sized elf made out of marshmallows, and a rapping Santa who makes 35 dollars an hour, who keeps rhyming "sleigh" with "Christmas Day" and "I'm here to say." Everyone in this town makes an insane wage doing quirky, essentially fake jobs.]

VIXEN: Holly! It's so good to see you! How are things?

HOLLY: Merp. Meh. [making a bunch of whiny sighs, and sounds like that]

VIXEN: I'm sorry to hear about you and your boyfriend, Rabbi Shmooly.

HOLLY: He was a Christian rabbi. He loved Christmas more than anything. You know what they say, opposites attract.

VIXEN: What went wrong? He was such a hunk!

HOLLY: Well, long story short, he insisted that the goose we were going to cook on Christmas should live with us for a few weeks so we could fatten it up. But in the end it was MY goose that was cooked, when the goose bit me so hard that I had to go to the hospital for Foot, Mouth and Wing Disease. Plus I caught him in bed with my BEST friend.

VIXEN: Wait, what? You caught the goose in bed with your best friend?

HOLLY: No, not the goose, Rabbi Schmooley. I caught Rabbi Schmooley in bed with my best friend.

VIXEN: Hold on—I thought I was your best friend?

HOLLY: No, not you. My CITY best friend. She was a Rockette with a latex allergy. I don't want to get too graphic but she was incredibly popular.

VIXEN: Can't compete with that. But what about your cushy job at the New York Times?

HOLLY: They canned me after my 30th column about why Christmas sucks. Oh, also I forgot to say that the Goose also ate my novel that I had just finished.

VIXEN: You finally finished your book, 'The Thanksgiving Pencil'?

HOLLY: I had the manuscript stacked neatly on the table next to a can of Goose Food. The dang goose was so hungry he gobbled up the food, the can, AND my masterpiece. I'm almost 24. By the time my grandma was 24, she had already had 17 kids! But enough about my SHITTY LIFE. How're things with you?

VIXEN: Well, I just had my 2nd child. We decided to name her Sugar Plum Baby Pie. And you already know her brother, Jack Frost Snowman. The candy cane business of mine that I run out of a quaint wooden cottage has really taken off. I recently got a huge order for a twenty foot long candy cane that they are going to use as a cane to drag people off the stage at the Apollo Theater. And you know my husband, Frosty D. Snowman. His Halloween costume business where he makes Christmas-themed Halloween costumes is really doing well. Life has been good to us. We're thinking of adding a 2nd Christmas tree in the foyer. Frosty might even be able to retire early to focus on his hobby: Christmas.

HOLLY: (sadly) Oh, well that's great. Sheesh. Everybody's doing so well except me. In the big city, I thought I had it all. Perfect boyfriend. Perfect job. Now I have nothing. It's really messing with me mentally.

VIXEN: [sarcastic] I thought we were talking about me. But no. No. We can talk about you again. By all means. Don't even ask me how little Jack Frost Snowman has already memorized all 12 days of Christmas. Don't even ask about how he already knows the exact number of maids a'milking.

HOLLY: Sometimes I wonder if I would've been better off if I'd just settled down as a maid a'milking. In this town it pays \$40 an hour with full benefits. And where's MY lord a'leaping? Where's my geese a'laying? Forget about FIVE golden rings—can I get just ONE please? An engagement ring.

VIXEN: Well, if you would have listened to your MOTHER and married that nice lumberjack who works at the Christmas tree farm—

HOLLY: I was 15! He was 60 years old! My mom just liked him because he was a big fat guy who jiggled like Figgy Pudding! I don't even like Figgy Pudding! I don't care how it jiggles!

VIXEN: He also owned quite a lot of reindeer.

HOLLY: I don't get that. Are reindeer worth a lot or something? Do we eat them? What do you do with reindeer?

VIXEN: (Explaining) We eat some of them but it's mostly about the Christmas Spirit kind of thing, like it's fortuitous to have them. It's vague. I don't think you get it, honey. Listen, just try to make the most out of Christmas this year. I'm sick of listening to you complain all the time. Why don't I get to complain? You don't think I have things to complain about? My husband's got these boxers that have mistletoe over the fly and he hasn't taken them off in three weeks—

HOLLY: Sorry Vixen! I don't have time for your complaints, some stuff with ME is happening! I've got a job interview with an editor from the local newspaper—he's supposed to meet me in this very cafe, in this very seat!

VIXEN: Fine. I guess I'll leave? Whatever makes your life easier. Everyone's just gotta do what you want all the time!

HOLLY: Thanks Vixen! I knew you would understand! You're not as rude as everyone says you are!

[doorbell sfx]

BLITZEN: Excuse me, are you Holly Silverbell? My name is Blitzen Comet, I'm the editor of the local newspaper, The Kringleville Kronicle. With a K.

HOLLY: As an editor, I bet that drives you mad.

BLITZEN: What? No! I love a festive Christmas alliteration!

HOLLY: I'm not sure this is going to be a good fit.

BLITZEN: Now hold on, We could use your big-city pedigree here at the Kringleville Kronicle. Most of our writers are only interested in holiday-themed fluff pieces. We haven't had a writer on the City Council beat in 30 years! I'm pretty sure our town is technically owned by Enron right now.

HOLLY: Hmm. My investigation into the secret history of Christmas—that it was invented by Big Figgy Pudding to sell more figgy pudding—WAS eligible for a Peabody Award.

BLITZEN: I read your poetry chapbook, "The Warbler's Trestle." It changed my life.

HOLLY: I thought it would change my life too. But here I am, back in the one place I said I would never return to. Look. Blitzen, I think you're a few marshmallows short of a hot chocolate. But I really need this job. I'll take it.

BLITZEN: I hadn't offered it to you yet. But I was about to. So congratulations! Your first assignment won't be easy. People around here don't like to talk about it, but there's a serial killer on the loose with a particularly gruesome method of murder. Each of his victims has been found impaled on an extra sharp candy cane. They're calling him the Candy Cane Killer.

HOLLY: With three Ks?

BLITZEN: No, that would be too much, even for us.

HOLLY: So what else do I need to know about him?

BLITZEN: Well, all his victims have been spinsters well into their early-mid-20s. You know the type. Unmarried. No kids. Thought they'd focus on their career for a while. See what the world had to offer beyond the duties of motherhood. Maybe they thought they would finish a novel or something. Maybe something about, I don't know, A Thanksgiving Pencil or something. Didn't think a Goose would eat the manuscript, even though they placed it right by the Goose food. Anyway, it's just a hypothetical.

HOLLY: I don't think it's really that weird anymore to be unmarried in your mid-twenties—

[The ENTIRE CAFE turns to face her.]

ENTIRE CAFE: Aw, Honey!

BLITZEN: The last victim—Elise Navidad—was found alone in her one bedroom apartment. No one noticed she went missing because she was unmarried. Her cats ate most of her. They only realized the Candy Cane Killer was the culprit because the cats had pieces of candy cane in their teeth. Must've eaten the murder weapon too. It's a shame, you know—23 and unmarried. Also, shame about the murder.

HOLLY: Were there any clues to go off besides that?

BLITZEN: Well, the killer left a note. Something about doing "Elf Care," but the joke didn't land and we didn't know what he was going for. I guess a pun on "Self care?" Everyone's mad at the cops for not understanding the clue, but I think people should be mad at the serial killer for leaving shitty clues.

HOLLY: Hmm. That clue won't be very useful. Thanks anyway though. I'll see what I can dig up.

BLITZEN: Well I'd better be going. I've got to edit a story about a group of 11 pipers. You wouldn't believe where they are a-piping. Be seeing you!

HOLLY: [sigh] At least my career is advancing. Unlike my love life.

[Suddenly, an extremely handsome man appears tableside. He's got a big broad chest stuffed sexily into a tight, festive sweater. Oh man, you can tell just by looking at this guy's rigid jawline that he's got like a million abs. He's got a handsome five o'clock shadow like Kurt Warner and perfect hair just like Brenda Warner. He's got deep, green eyes like they were two big mistletoes. He's got dick-me-down legs. He's got a perfectly toned back like he just spent 10 years in prison. He looks like liquid sex poured into the most form-fitting Khakis of all time.]

DALLAS: Hello. My name's Dallas Dasher. I'm a barista here and I couldn't help but notice you need a refill on your drink. Is your husband around so I can inform him how I'm going to help you more better?

HOLLY: I'm Holly. Holly Silverbell. No husband.

DALLAS: Oh, I'm sorry. Did he die in the war?

HOLLY: I wish. Sadly I'm the quintessential spinster. I'm so focused on career, career, career, that I never stopped to think about getting married and getting some kids stuffed in me or ripped out of me or whatever or however it works.

DALLAS: No I completely understand. I'm already 25 but haven't even started thinking about kids! Until now, I've been fully focused on being the best barista, ski instructor, and town crier

this village has ever seen! You know, it's embarrassing—I've already bought the perfect three-bedroom house with the white picket fence and ample space for some rugrats to run around, but I don't even have a wife! My biological clock is ticking. Sometimes it makes me horny. But not in a way that would be a burden to a potential romantic partner. And I would never be rude to you. Or your mother. What's crazy is I'm not married OR gay—AND I'm one of the good ones!

HOLLY: You're single? In this town? I'm surprised there aren't any Christmas-crazed hoes beating your door down trying to rip the pants off you and get a taste of that jeans meat.

DALLAS: Oh you know. Women around here are nice but, I don't know. Sometimes I think I'm just waiting for a special something—or someONE.

HOLLY: And in the meantime? How do you manage the loneliness of being single?

DALLAS: Basically I go off to my cabin in the woods and hook up with myself for a day. And I mean all day. I got everything up there—BoobHub, YouCum, ScrewTube. ScrewTube's my favorite. And you know? I don't overthink it. Sometimes just good old fashioned Mr. Skin is good enough for me. Ever see From Dusk Til Dawn?

HOLLY: The one with Salma Hayek? With that scene at the 54 minute 46 second timestamp where you see all kinds of crazy stuff?

DALLAS: You DO know it! I can't even TELL you how much self-care I've given myself to that timestamp. Say, forgive me for being so forward... Would you like to have a glass-and-a-half of riesling with me and watch 6 hours of a Discovery Plus show where people live in other people's houses secretly, or maybe we could just have a chill night and watch Dr. Pimple Popper while we complain about women at work and the shady things they do. Or maybe we could just snuggle up under a blanket and I could show you my Nutcracker. Which is not a euphemism, by the way, I mean my actual, authentic Christmas nutcracker. It was made by THE Nutcracker. The one from that play?

HOLLY: [sigh] Look, you seem nice and all. But I could never be with a Christmas guy.

DALLAS: I understand. I respect all women's boundaries. I'll just go back to where I was before and try to think of more ways to respect you. It was nice meeting you, Holly Silverbell. I hope I see you around.

HOLLY: I'm sure you will. But I've gotta meet up with my family for dinner. My mother is going to be furious that I've been in town for two hours and haven't even said hello!

[Holly Silverbell walks up to an idyllic three-story home adorned with Christmas lights and a snow machine spraying fake snow all over the front yard. There's a huge animatronic Santa singing Rockin' Robin in the TikTok voice. On the side of the house there is a big ass Rudolph

mural three stories tall, and there's a speech bubble where he's saying "Ass, cash, or grass, Santa gives it all away for free!" Also, the rapping santa from the previous scene is in front of the house rapping on the sidewalk. This time he is rhyming "mistletoe" with "check my flow".]

HOLLY: Hey mom, what's up with that big ass Rudolph mural?

MOM: Oh you know your father. He got into painting and he just couldn't resist a nice yuletide mural! You know how much he loves Christmas.

HOLLY: Apparently not enough to BE THERE for us ON Christmas Day.

MOM: Listen. You know your dad has a weird ass job. He only works one-and-a-half days out of the year. A day and a night really. The night before Christmas. It was hard on him too.

HOLLY: You know, my name is HOLLY, but my Christmases weren't so Holly-Jolly.

MOM: I know dear. Say, what's up with that boyfriend of yours in the big city? Rabbi Schmooly? You know, the Christian Rabbi who loved Christmas?

HOLLY: More like Ra-bye-bye Schmooly. We broke up, mom. Or, to be more specific, he broke up with me. While I was in the hospital getting Goose Surgery, he porked my best friend!

MOM: Porked? I thought he was a Rabbi.

HOLLY: CHRISTMAS Rabbi, mom!

MOM: Well, come on and get inside. It's cold. I don't know if you've noticed or not, but it's almost Christmas.

HOLLY: [sincerely] Hey Mom... I'm not a huge fuckup, am I? You know, since I don't have a boyfriend and I got fired from my job and I have to move back in with my parents at the ripe old age of 23?

MOM: Oh honey. Let's get inside and change the subject. Do you like eggnog?

[HOLLY and her MOM step inside the house, which is completely filled with miniature Christmas Villages and an electric train that runs through the entirety of the house. Stairs, basement, bathroom—trains are going everywhere and making a ton of noise.]

HOLLY: [sigh] Dad's not here? Guess he's too busy for us again.

MOM: Oh honey, I sure missed your complaining. Say, maybe that's why you aren't married, you know? It's all the complaining you do about everything. Just trying to help!



HOLLY: Gee, thanks mom.

MOM: Cheer up honey. How about a little peppermint Schnapps in your hot chocolate? More eggs for your eggnog?

[With a spatula, she plops three fried eggs into Holly's cup.]

MOM: And don't forget more mulled wine!

HOLLY: Mom I've got like 7 glasses! When you said I need to get into the Christmas SPIRIT, I didn't know you meant Brandy.

DAD: Ho ho ho! Who's that I hear complaining? Is my daughter home?

[Holly's DAD walks into the house, carrying a big sack of toys. He's wearing a red sweater with white fringe around the buttons, the sleeves and the bottom. His red pants match and he has a big black belt with a buckle on it. He has a big white beard, white hair and a red hat. He is covered in cookie crumbs. Also, he's fat and jolly.]

HOLLY: Gee, couldn't wait till after dinner to stuff your face with cookies, dad?

DAD: Oh, that's my daughter! Always complaining! So glad you're home, honey! How was the big city?

HOLLY: More like the Big Shitty. I lost my job and my boyfriend and I got bit by a goose and now I have to move back in with my parents during the most shittiest time of the year!

DAD: Oh, you still hate Christmas after all these years, huh? How could you hate your own BIRTHDAY?

HOLLY: How would you even know if I hate Christmas, dad, considering you've never been here for one.

MOM: Holly! Your dad works very hard for exactly one 30-hour period each year! He's got a weird job that won't let him shave his big white beard! Also, he knows that you hate Christmas because you complain about it all the time!

DAD: Come on, honey. We don't need to fight. Just do like your mom does and drink a bunch of DiSaronno.

HOLLY: More like DiSa-No-no. Because I don't want to drink it.

MOM: Honey, this is the most jolliest time of the year. You haven't eaten anything since you got home. I made all these sugar plums and French Hens. It's fun to eat Christmas food!!

HOLLY: Tell that to the Christmas goose who ate my manuscript!! I'm out of here!! I'm going to go find this Crime Scene I heard about—at my job—my REAL job, that's the opposite of your job where I work the whole year EXCEPT Christmas? Ever heard of it?

DAD: Yeah, I've heard of Christmas. I'm San—

[CUT to HOLLY storming outside. The Rapping Santa is still there and he stopped rapping because he thought no one was around. When he sees Holly, he jumps up real quick and starts rapping again.]

RAPPING SANTA: I'm the one on the top of the tree / because no one's out here stopping me!

[HOLLY gives the rapping Santa a quarter and he smiles and nods. He makes \$35 an hour so a tip this small is pretty insulting. But oh well—that's our Holly!]

RAPPING SANTA: Thank you ma'am for your gratitude / I'm going to buy some yummy food!

HOLLY: Alright, get the fuck out of here. I have a crime scene to get to.

[HOLLY stomps off mad to the crime scene. She's doing that thing where she's all grumpy and she exhales loudly and it blows her bangs up in the air. She walks into the crime scene, which is in a big empty house and they left all the doors and windows open and the dead body is there all frozen so it doesn't stink or anything. She turns on a light and gets down on one knee to inspect the corpse. She is an old maid, age 24, dead on the living room floor.]

HOLLY: Poor woman. Funny thing is, that could have been me. Another dead old bitch. Probably focused on her career or something. Oh honey, I feel like I know you. Your wall is full of degrees, but your womb is empty. You were more into stocks than storks—like the ones that bring babies? Yeah I can tell by your haircut. You were more into HAVING bangs, than GETTING banded to have a baby. Another dead white woman that the media does not care about. Listen bitch, I will solve your murder if my name isn't Holly Whatever. Cmon, Holly, you can do this. You didn't go to the Nancy Drew Clue School for Nosy Women for nothing. But man, how am I supposed to find a CLUE in a climate where women are taught to idolize the movie CLUELESS? But I guess I should stop monologuing and actually look around. Hey, look at that!

[HOLLY bends over and looks at the murder weapon laying right next to the corpse. It's a big candy cane covered in blood. On the hilt of the candy cane, she spies something intriguing... A bizarre, curved footprint, that looks like it came from someone wearing some sort of annoying shoe.]

HOLLY: A curved shoe? Here? In a Christmas-themed small town? That looks like a clue to me. That's a clue. I'm going to remember this clue because maybe it will help me later on in the movie.

[Ring-a-ding-ding. Ring-a-ding-ding. We hear the sound of a bell.]

HOLLY: What's that noise? Hold on. I don't think I'm alone.

DALLAS: Bedtime! Bedtime! Everyone go to bed, it's bedtime!

HOLLY: D-Dallas? Is that you? What are you doing?

DALLAS: Holly! I could ask you the same question. You're standing next to a corpse—that hardly seems safe! Do you need me to protect you? I could kick it?

HOLLY: I don't need protecting. And I don't need someone to tell me what time to go to bed. Who do you think I am—Wee Willy Winky?

DALLAS: I don't know who that is. I mostly only know Christmas stories.

HOLLY: I gotta say, standing here with a bloody candy cane over a dead girl, I don't really feel much in the Christmas spirit.

DALLAS: Well I'm glad I found you. I'm working my night shift as the town crier. But I was just about to clock out. Come on. I'll walk you home.

HOLLY: Well, I guess I'm almost done here. I found the single clue that I came for, and also empathized with the murdered woman. Tell me, while we're walking... Did you know anything about her?

DALLAS: Not really. Her name was Chrissy Mas. She was basically a prude and she was always reenacting Cathy comics in real life. You know, buying big sheet cakes to eat all by herself—and she had a very tense relationship with her mother. She couldn't control herself around chocolate and she had a bunch of cats all named after characters from Bridgerton. She was 5'3", 120 pounds, and her bra size was 36B... Pretty normal as far as boob size goes. She graduated with a 3.4 GPA from Christmas University, home of the fightin' Santas, with a double major in Working Hard and Playing Hard. Her social security number was 344 - 91 - 8030. But other than that, I didn't really know much about her. Nobody in town did. Also, she had a tattoo on her lower back that said "SEED OILS" in the papyrus font. But yeah, she was kind of an unknown. Say, why are you carrying that bloody candy cane?

HOLLY: Ew. Forgot I was carrying it. I guess I'll just leave the evidence here for later.

DALLAS: You know, I was thinking... No... It's stupid... But... I was just thinking how you said you'd never go out with a Christmas guy. And well. Sure Christmas is my favorite time of year. But I'm so much more than that. 364 days a year, I work hard and save all my money. I've got a three-bedroom dream home that's just waiting for a family!

HOLLY: I don't even have time to THINK about a family now. I don't care if all my eggs dry up and spill out of me like a bag of marbles. Besides, I already have a family. Nouns, verbs, adjectives—my writing is my life and the words are my family!

DALLAS: Oh OK. It's just that... I really want a mother-in-law to treasure. And I leave the toilet seat down even when I'm by myself. And... My pet peeve is that I hate when people say gross things during dinner. And I guess I just... I just wanted someone I can watch Desperado with, someone who always wants to skip ahead to 1 hour, 11 minutes—

HOLLY: —11 minutes and 6 seconds! The naked part!

DALLAS: So you DO know the scene!

HOLLY: I do. OK Dallas Dasher. I'll let you take me on one date. But it CAN'T be Christmas themed in ANY way.

DALLAS: You won't regret this, Holly. I promise you—and your mother—that I'm going to be incredibly respectful AND handsome for the entire date. Thank you for giving me a chance. I know I'm just a small town hick with a rocking bod and cum gutters you could drink eggnog out of—by the way, when I say cum gutters, I mean my huge triangle dick muscles that are always bursting out of my low rise jeans.

HOLLY: You say you're respectful, but you mentioned your cum gutters instantly. That level of impropriety is so—

[DALLAS lifts up his shirt in the middle of Holly's sentence to reveal a torso that looks like ripped Jesus Christ if he was modeling for an Abercrombie catalog. He appears to already have baby oil on and you can see the top part of his penis because the jeans are so low.]

HOLLY: Nevermind. You're fine. Forget what I said. Anyway, this is my house. It should still be here tomorrow when you come get me.

DALLAS: Do you mind if I say hi to your mom real quick? Uh, actually, I'll just text her. If that's okay with you?

HOLLY: Sure. Here's her number. And mine. And remember, no Christmas stuff. My last boyfriend was named Rabbi Schmooly—and he would never shut up about Christmas. I'm NOT making that mistake again.

DALLAS: Rabbi Schmooly... you mean the Christmas Rabbi? Big shoes to fill.

HOLLY: Gotta go!

[The next day, on Christmas Eve Morning, VIXEN and HOLLY are seated at Jingle Bell Coffee at the exact same table they were at the day before.]

HOLLY: So uhh, Dallas asked me out yesterday. Dallas Dasher? You know, the Christmas FREAK?

VIXEN: You mean the guy who's making a latte 5 feet away from us right now? I don't think you should talk about this while he's right there. I mean, I could reach over and touch him. Watch.

[VIXEN reaches backwards toward DALLAS and lifts up his shirt a little and touches his cum gutters. DALLAS doesn't even seem to respond.]

HOLLY: Why are you touching him?

VIXEN: He lets all the ladies in town do it. I don't even think he notices anymore. Old Mrs. Tinseltoes used to come in here and put her fist in his mouth. He never even commented on it. And besides, why should you care? I thought you didn't date Christmas guys.

HOLLY: Well, we promised to meet halfway—he won't bring up any Christmas stuff and I won't tell him my ideas for New Yorker cartoons. Basically I've got one where the wife is watching a movie adaptation of Thoreau's Walden, and the husband says "This is boring!" and the wife says, "You know, most men lead lives of QUIET desperation!"

VIXEN: Wow. That sucks. Also, do whatever you want. Fuck him, date him, do whatever, I don't care anymore. You haven't even asked me about my day yet. Did you know that my husband Frosty got my car detailed and also he bought me a new car and also, instead of a car it's a big sled? I'm sick of hearing about your problems all of the time. Dallas Dasher could chop you up into a million little pieces for all I care.

HOLLY: Well my CAREER is in a million little pieces since I lost my job, and my boyfriend Rabbi Schmooly, and—

VIXEN: I'm serious. He could put you in a box underground for the rest of your life and I wouldn't lift a finger to stop him. I'm done. I'm serious. I've been talking about you behind your back to anyone who will listen.

HOLLY: I guess you're right. What's the point of bearing my soul to you when you don't even listen. You probably don't even remember about my manuscript, The Thanksgiving Pencil.

VIXEN: I wouldn't even care if it was a CHRISTMAS Pencil! I spit in your coffee while you were in the bathroom! Everyone in the coffee shop saw me do it and nobody said anything to you!

HOLLY: So? I don't care. This coffee is already skunked anyway. You know what Vixen—you were supposed to be my friend. And friends are supposed to listen to their friends say all of their problems all at once all of the time! Oh, and by the way—"the Christmas Pencil" is a terrible idea and doesn't make any sense. The Thanksgiving Pencil makes sense because it was the thing used to write down all of the ingredients on the shopping list for Thanksgiving.

VIXEN: Listen here Holly Silverbell. And listen good. In the souls of the people—people like me and Dallas Dasher—the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage.

HOLLY: Where'd you hear that line? Read it in some dumb book?

VIXEN: You oughta know. I thought you wrote books? Oh wait. A Christmas goose ate your only manuscript.

HOLLY: I wish that Christmas Goose would have ate me! I hate you! I don't have any friends left!

VIXEN: Well for your sake I hope Santa brings you a new best friend!

HOLLY: I don't even celebrate Christmas!

[In the corner of the coffee shop, a TV cuts to a breaking local news report.]

NEWSCASTER: Breaking news out of Kringleville or whatever. The Candy Cane Killer struck again last night, killing another old maid. This one was 22 years old, and I do mean old. Carol Ofdabells was found last night, impaled on a candy cane in her studio apartment while watching a true crime show ranking which serial killers were the hottest. It was called "TruTV Hot 100". She was a very career-oriented woman who didn't have time to start a family, despite the protests of her mother. There will be no funeral, since she had no husband and no children, there is no one available to take care of her remains. She will be tossed into the woods by a public sanitation worker following the conclusion of the autopsy. Her mother would like to comment: "Everyone at work keeps asking me when I'm going to be a grandmother and it was getting embarrassing." And now, Trent with local news.

TRENT: Cat parade today in downtown Kringleville and judging by the smiles, nothing bad happens here ever—

HOLLY: Oh wow, Vixen, it's looking pretty dangerous out there. Say, could you give me a ride home?

[HOLLY looks over and sees that VIXEN has already left. In fact, she left so fast that her chair is still spinning around. HOLLY looks around like “oh, brother” and then she exhales upward and blows at her bangs. Everyone in the cafe who sees her do this audibly sighs because it is like the fourth time she’s done this in the script. As she walks home, she is nose-deep in a book called “The Halloween Pencil” by Jack O’Lantern. In this book, the point of the Halloween pencil is to write down a list of halloween costume ideas. As she approaches her house, the RAPPING SANTA wakes up off of the ground.]

RAPPING SANTA: Hope you’re ready for this Christmas Blizzard / Because we all got to go see that Christmas Lizard!

[HOLLY flips the RAPPING SANTA a coin and he lays face down in the snow and goes back to sleep.]

DAD: Hey honey. You know if you keep giving that Rapping Santa coins he’s never going to go away.

MOM: Now now dear. She’s under a lot of stress from all the boring stuff in her life.

HOLLY: I’m glad you understand mom. And I wanted to apologize. Last night the Candy Cane Killer struck again, taking down another dusty old spinster like me. And this time I thought, what if that was me? And I just wanted to apologize for being so out of line and focusing so much on my career and my novel called The Thanksgiving Pencil, instead of on my matrimonial and procreational duties.

MOM: No. I understand. And I want to apologize for just wanting what’s best for you, and always knowing what’s right, and looking out for you even though you don’t know better. But I suppose you want to learn the hard way? Anyway I apologize.

DAD: Honey. I want to apologize too. I know that you’re mad at me for missing every Christmas for all of your life, and I just want to say that I’m sorry that I’m going to miss this Christmas too. I got some work up north—if you know what I mean—and it’s been crazy lately. I’ve been having problems with my Elfff-vira. Elvira. As you know, I’ve started working with... Elvira. And I’ve also been having problems with the reindeer—rain, dear, rain... reign over me. The movie. With Adam Sandler? His daughters died in 9/11, Holly. And Elvira is doing a reboot. Also, it’s been snowing so much in the North Pole. North... Face. North Face factory. The clothing brand? Yeah, they are going to be making dresses for Elvira. Also for the Elves and the reindeer. Also, my Santa suit doesn’t fit and I’m Santa... for Elvira I mean. It’s complicated, my work is crazy, and you can see why I can’t make it. You get it.

HOLLY: No. No. I understand. Why would you start making time for me now? I’m over the hill. No kids. Too old to become a starting NFL quarterback. Yeah, remember that dream, dad? That was all you wanted for me. But come Christmas morning, you were never there to toss around the pigskin with me. Now who’d wanna go long with a dusty old spinster!

DAD: Cmon, don't be so hard on yourself. You're not an old spinster. Old maid at best. I just want you to take care of yourself.

[He hands her a glass of milk filled all the way to the brim. She reluctantly takes a sip and gets a milk mustache, just as Dallas Dasher pulls up in what looks suspiciously like a sleigh being pulled by Budweiser clydesdales.]

DALLAS: Hey, is Holly around? I'm here for our date.

DAD: Yeah. She's standing right in front of you.

DALLAS: Oh I thought that was some guy. 'Cause of the mustache.

HOLLY: It's just a milk mustache from this milk my STUPID dad made me drink!

DALLAS: Oh you like milk too? I thought since you hate Christmas, you wouldn't like Santa's favorite drink...

HOLLY: I thought we said No Christmas. This looks like a sleigh and a couple of Budweiser clydesdales.

DALLAS: Don't worry, this is a Muslim sleigh I got from an Imam. And these are regular clydesdales—one's Jewish and one's Bahai. I assume you're satisfied with my explanation?

HOLLY: What about the boughs of Holly?

DALLAS: Yeah, I thought that was a Christmas thing too but one of the horses told me it was pagan.

HOLLY: Isn't this a little much for a first date?

DALLAS: Yeah, well, you seem like a special person. And I wanted to show you just how special you were.

HOLLY: Ohsome!

MOM: You're wearing THAT? Carhartt coveralls and Timbs?

HOLLY: What would YOU suggest, mom? A wedding ring? I don't HAVE one!!

MOM [under her breath]: Did you see this guy's cum gutters? You can't be dressed like Lloyd Banks from G-UNIT on a date with this guy! On me and your father's first date, I wore a thong



so small that I lost it inside of me at one point. You need to try harder. This guy looks like straight Ryan Seacrest and he smells like the candle aisle at Target.

HOLLY: This is all I packed mom! This and my Yankees pinstripe flat brim.

MOM: At least take the sticker off!

DALLAS: And you must be Holly's SISTER?

HOLLY: Is that a compliment for my mom or another dig on me being an old maid?

MOM: Oh Dallas! You're quite the charmer. Do you have any pictures of yourself in your wallet I could have?

DALLAS: Sure, 5x7 work for you?

MOM: 5x7 will be fine.

DAD: I'll take a 5x7 too.

HOLLY: Wow Dallas, I didn't know you posed for Rascal Magazine!

DALLAS: I was real messed up then. Pills. I was doing pills. Making my own pills. But that didn't stop me from being Beefcake of the Week three times in a row.

MOM: Dallas, tell me. Why should I trust my daughter with an avowed pillhead, ravishing as he may be?

DALLAS: Ma'am I cleaned up in the service. All I need now is a little eggnog and to hook up with myself in my cabin. Now, I like to live a simple life. I make my own Christmas crafts. Do a fundraiser once a year with the Regis Philbin Foundation to raise money for Notre Dame's Stickball team. They got a CGI Regis doing Fortnite dances. Oprah. I like Oprah. I like doing recipes that take 30 minutes or less. I knit my own blankets. I'm handy around the house, I never discuss politics or sex in front of mixed company, I always say please and thank you. When an old lady drinks a bunch of wine and gets handsy, I never say anything. Even if they try to zip down my fly. I have a CVS ExtraCare card and I'm very active on NextDoor. And I think it's rude to not like someone's status on Facebook. I wish I had some photos of grandkids to show you. Maybe someday...?

MOM: Holly, I think I like him.

HOLLY: Can we get moving? The restaurant is going to close before we get there.

DALLAS: Of course. Mom, Dad—can I call you that?

HOLLY: I don't think—

MOM: Of course!

DAD: It would be our honor!

HOLLY: Okay we're leaving now love you bye!

[HOLLY and DALLAS ride off in his nondenominational sleigh. Her MOM and DAD smile and look at each other.]

MOM: You know, she may be alright after all.

DAD: Did you see that guy's cum gutters?

[CUT to HOLLY and DALLAS on their date, riding through Kringleville on his sleigh. HOLLY reaches for the radio dial.]

HOLLY: Cursive. The Recluse. Not bad.

DALLAS: Oh, hell no. You didn't just touch my goddamn radio.

HOLLY: The Ugly Organ by Cursive is an indie rock classic.

DALLAS: Cursive will get you a great ass-whoopin'. Don't ever touch a Christmas guy's radio. You can do that in New York but you'll get your ass killed out here. Let me show you real music.

[He changes the radio to "Simply Having a Wonderful Christmastime."]

DALLAS: That's real music. You hear that? Now can you do that to Cursive? Hell no!

[They pull up to an Italian restaurant suspiciously decked out in red and green lights. It's called Nonna Rudolph's Pizza & Eggnog Parlor.]

HOLLY: I thought I said No Christmas. I could stomach the Paul McCartney song, but this place seems to have a suspicious Yuletide cheer to it.

DALLAS: Oh nah. Nah. It's Italian. I think Nonna means Spaghetti in Italian. And Rudolph—why, that's just some old grandma's name. It was this loopy old bitch's name before it was a reindeer's name. You have to admit that. Do you admit that Rudolph was a human name before it was a reindeer name?

HOLLY: Okay, yes, I guess, but that's not what I was saying.

DALLAS: Then it's settled. This isn't a Christmas restaurant because you admitted that Rudolph was a person's name first and since it isn't a Christmas restaurant we can just walk right in and have a nice date. Besides, I don't even think Italians celebrate Christmas. I'm going to walk in and hold the door open for you before you change your mind.

[They enter and immediately a big fat Santa starts saying "HO HO HO!" at them. DALLAS rushes over and whispers into the guy's ear.]

DALLAS: I told you man, no Christmas stuff when she walks in! She doesn't like it! Don't blow this for me! There's only like 3 women in this town that are single and haven't been eviscerated by that serial killer yet.

SANTA: I thought you were kidding! What kind of putrid, rotting human scum could not like Christmas?

DALLAS: It's complicated. I think her dad is Santa. Just get out of here and let me do my thang.

SANTA: Well Hello-Ho-Ho-Ho young lady. That's all I was trying to say earlier. Anyway, gotta go!

HOLLY: That was odd. I'm willing to let it slide though. Let's order a big pizza and drink 20 beers.

DALLAS: Say, you don't mind if we order a pitcher of eggnog as well?

HOLLY: Well, it's a little Christmasy, but I can overlook it this one time.

DALLAS: Don't worry I'm still going to drink 20 beers. And guess what? I'm not going to rant about ancient Rome or explain the Senate to you. I just finished Band of Brothers again and I really want to talk about it but I'm not going to because I know you won't be interested in the heroics of Dick Winters. What do YOU want to talk about?

HOLLY: You know, I was watching Frida the other night. And I couldn't help but think of you at this one moment—

DALLAS: You mean...

BOTH: 1 hour 38 minutes and 36 seconds? When those chicks go beast mode on each other?

HOLLY: Yeah. I was probably thinking of you 'cause of the nudity.

DALLAS: That's crazy. Look, I know you didn't want to date me 'cause I'm a Christmas guy. But I want you to know there's SO much more to me than Christmas. Like uhhh.... Hm... Well. Like this glass of water. Here. I got this for you.

HOLLY: (surprised) How'd you know I like water?

DALLAS: (romantically) I noticed that your body mass is roughly 60% water.

HOLLY: Well that's sweet but I'm saving room for 20 beers. I'll probably need this later though, I'll put it in my pocket. Say, I know you like Christmas, but I don't know very much else about you. Tell me, why is a guy with an ass like an anvil still single?

DALLAS: Well, I guess my story is a little like yours, except with way more Christmas shit. I've been so busy for so long. When I say I'm all about career, career, career, that's because I literally have three careers. I'm a barista, a town crier, and a ski instructor. Not very impressive, I know, but I have bigger dreams. One day, no, this is stupid, you don't want to hear about this—

HOLLY: No, tell me. Or else I'll hold my breath till I die.

DALLAS: Oh my god, no! Please!

[He immediately starts crying and punches the table as hard as he can.]

DALLAS: FUCK!

HOLLY: Jesus man, I was kidding. Just tell me your dreams. I'm interested.

DALLAS: Okay, okay, well, don't laugh but... I want to be the Town Crier in New York Times Square one day. I know I'm just a dumb country yokel, some Christmas hick with a body fit for a statue on Mount Olympus, but I've always dreamed of being the Town Crier in Times Square and lighting up that big tree on that special day. You know the one. Christmas.

HOLLY: I worked for the New York Times—the Times Square Town Crier is employed by the paper. I shared a cubicle with him! If I still worked there I could get you a nepotism job. But sadly, they all hate me now. Everyone hates me. I guess I'm just an irredeemable fuck up 23-year-old spinster who's going to die alone!

[She immediately starts crying and punches the table as hard as she can.]

HOLLY: FUCK!

WAITER: Couple more drinks, or?

HOLLY: Uhh. Yeah. 20 beers. NOW!

DALLAS: Wait Holly. I want to share something else with you. My favorite cocktail. Waiter, we'll take two Yule Logs. That's whole milk and a raw egg with Rumple Minze and Fireball, garnished with cinnamon sticks and cloves. And better make those doubles.

WAITER: Certainly sir. And please, will you guys stop punching the table? You're freaking out the other customers.

DALLAS: That was pretty rude of that waiter to ask us not to punch the table, right?

HOLLY: So, Dallas, now that we're settled in, why don't I just ask you some first date questions?

DALLAS: 6 inches—7 if I've been yanking on it a lot! Like when I'm hooking up with myself in my cabin all damn day.

HOLLY: And what are your marital sex expectations?

DALLAS: My marital sex expectations are very reasonable. Once a week, never before work, only after we both shower. My move is basically that if my dick was hard and we were in bed together I would just kind of rub it on your leg and see what you say. If you get mad, I would pretend that I had rubbed it on you on accident.

HOLLY: Damn that's wassup!

DALLAS: Yeah, and basically I fall asleep right after. Hold on just one second. Nature is calling if you know what I mean. And its call sounds just like a little trumpet because I have to go take a crud and I'm farting and that sounds like a little trumpet to me.

[He gets up, bumps the table, spills 20 beers all over the floor, and farts as he's walking away.]

DALLAS: This date is going great. I feel so comfortable around you.

[Almost immediately, he texts her "Whaddup tho. U still herE?" From her table, Holly can hear sound effects from the game Angry Birds coming from the bathroom. But just then, HOLLY's phone starts ringing.]

HOLLY: Hello? This is Holly Silverbell, I dislike Christmas.

BLITZEN: Holly! It's your boss, Blitzen Comet, from earlier in the movie. I know you're busy trying to balance work and your love life, but this can't wait. The Candy Cane Killer has announced that he plans to do a murder on Christmas Day... That's the day that Christmas falls on this year! He's going to ruin the Hollyest Jollyest time of the season!

HOLLY: How do you know this?

BLITZEN: He took out an ad in our paper. I'm not gonna lie, we really needed it. Local papers are getting KILLED. We'll take money from anyone. Serial killers, pill poppers, kleptos, perverts, nymphos, freakazoids, hucksters, fucksters, road head champions, gay guys, straight guys, dogs, dead guys, deadheads. As long as your money's green. Or you can smoke us out. Or pay for gas. But we'd prefer you smoke us out. I'm not proud to admit this, but if you let me hit...

HOLLY: Why are you telling me all this? Isn't there a killer running around?

BLITZEN: I'll also barter. Furs, coins, antiques, Xbox, sports card, hell, I'll take your kids Nintendo Switch if I have to. That's just the kind of guy I am. I'm a survivor.

HOLLY: So what exactly did the killer say?

BLITZEN: He said he plans to strike tomorrow at noon. At this big Christmas Lizard ceremony. You know, the one where everyone in town lines up for a chance to pet the Christmas Lizard? Oh. And one more thing. The Candy Cane Killer was just spotted near the Candy Cane Shop. You know, the one run by your friend Vixen Prancer? I hope you're not on a first date or anything that's going really well. Especially if he's a Christmas guy. Besides, you know, it would never work out between you and a Christmas guy—

HOLLY: No, it's OK! I'm all career career career, my love life isn't as important as a pile of spinster corpses! I'm only like 15 beers deep so I'm still good to jog over there and see what I can dig up. Hopefully Vixen isn't too mad at me for not asking any questions at all about her or showing any interest at all in her personal life for my entire life. Maybe I'll get back before Dallas is finished in the bathroom!

[HOLLY gets up and rushes out of the restaurant at full speed. As she goes out the door, we hear a bunch of dumb groans coming from the bathroom. You can't really tell what he's saying, but you can tell that he's crosseyed when he says it.]

[CUT to Vixen Prancer's Candy Cane shop. Candy Canes of various lengths are propped up on stands like a bunch of guns. Vixen Prancer is standing behind the counter timing herself dismantling and putting back together a military-grade candy cane.]

HOLLY: Vixen! The Candy Cane Killer was spotted in your store! Did you get a good look at him?

VIXEN: How about a "Hello"? Normal people say "hello" when they walk into a candy cane store. But to answer your question, I don't care WHO my customers are or WHAT they do! Not my problem!

HOLLY: Come on, did you notice a man with suspiciously curved shoes purchasing any extremely sharp candy canes?

VIXEN: Meh. Maybe I did, maybe I didn't. You're supposed to do a background check when someone buys one of the real sharp ones, but I don't do it 'cause I don't CARE! Maybe ask me how my day was and then I'll help you with your murder investigation!

HOLLY: Look, Vixen, I'm sorry for being such a, let's face it, a Scrooge. I'm sorry for not knowing your birthday or any of your kids names and I'm sorry that I play a video on my phone super loudly every single time you start talking. I'm sorry I taped over your only recording of your wedding with some Frasier reruns. But I'm trying to solve a MURDER! I think this is bigger than us.

VIXEN: It's always about the murder YOU'RE solving. What about the murders I'M trying to solve? Ever ask me about that? Have you ever asked me about anything? I saw a GENIE yesterday—pretty interesting right? Any questions about that?

HOLLY [mumbling]: Probably some kinda fuckin'... Christmas genie...

VIXEN: So what if it was a Christmas Genie!? It's still a genie!

HOLLY: What do you want from me? What do you want me to say? I've had a lot going on lately trying to balance work and family and my love life. I just want to have it all. Is that so much to ask?

VIXEN: Just because you're unhappy doesn't mean I have to be unhappy too.

HOLLY: Just because I never answer your calls and hate learning things about you doesn't mean that you aren't my best friend. And what about you? You haven't even asked me about the date I'm on that I just bailed from that I didn't tell you was happening.

VIXEN: Let me tell you, if I was going on a date that I didn't tell you about, I would still tell you about the date so that you would know to ask me about the date that I didn't tell you that I went on.

HOLLY: I know you don't REMEMBER the date that I didn't tell you about and that's my right as a woman to not tell you about what I'm doing because you have a tendency to be super shady about stuff that I don't tell you about.

VIXEN: I would always tell you about stuff that you wouldn't want me to know about because if I knew about it I would tell you. And you know my biggest pet peeve is when people lie to me.

HOLLY: My biggest pet peeve is when people who know I'm a liar say that their biggest pet peeve is liars.

VIXEN: You're lying right now. Your biggest pet peeve is Christmas. You're a liar.

HOLLY: Just because I'm lying doesn't mean I'm a liar!

VIXEN: Well, I—I forgot what we are fighting about. Did I win? Who won that fight?

HOLLY: I don't remember. Are we done fighting? Can you tell me about the killer?

VIXEN: I can't remember if we are fighting so I think we're done fighting. I think that means I won the fight. So now, I'm going to tell you about the Candy Cane Killer that was in here earlier. I'm going to tell you that I don't really remember and also we take our customer's privacy really seriously here so also I can't tell you anything. I'm sorry that I went through all that just to not have any good information for you, but I was pretty mad at you earlier and I wanted to fight with you. Now, do you want to see any pictures from my family vacation?

HOLLY: No! I'd rather die!

[HOLLY storms out of the Candy Cane Store and looks down. She sees footprints in the snow—curved ones! Instinctively, she follows...]

HOLLY: These footprints will take me RIGHT to the candy cane killer. Who probably won't try to kill ME!

DALLAS: Holly! I found you! I've been looking all over. You know, they call it a number 2, but they should call it a number 20. 'Cause of how many minutes it takes. Where did you go? Did someone kidnap you?

HOLLY: I'm sorry, Dallas, this work thing came up—

DALLAS: Enough! I've tried really hard to get to know you and make you happy. I threw out the Christmas tree at that Italian restaurant even though they tried as hard as they could to stop me. I converted the town reindeer to Islam so that you'd be more comfortable. I didn't even get a mistletoe garnish on my Spaghetti and Meatballs. I'm sorry if I'm not enough for you. Merry Christmas. I'm just gonna go to your parents' house to tell your mother Goodbye and then you'll never hear from me again.

[DALLAS turns around and sprints off into the snow. HOLLY watches him sprint for like thirty seconds straight and he disappears into the woods.]

HOLLY: The footprints... The snow covered them up! I've lost the trail! [sigh] Maybe I should track down Dallas so I can explain, but... He was running *really* fast. I'm just gonna go home and get blasted off some weird vodka flavors.

[Cut to a montage where there's sad girl music playing with a bunch of lyrics about how they aren't the prom queen or whatever. HOLLY is at home on the couch in the most unflattering sweats of all time and like weird big diabetes socks and she is crying while eating a whole sheet



cake and watching Popeye the Sailor man on TV. When Bluto kidnaps Olive Oyl for the fifteenth time, she starts bawling uncontrollably. Bluto takes off his shirt to fight and she notices that he has the same cum gutters that DALLAS has... she looks at a picture of him on her phone and just tilts back a fifth of Burnett's Banana Split Vodka. Then she pours a bunch of grocery store sushi into a bowl, drenches it in ketchup, and eats it by hand like it's popcorn. She passes out on the couch, and that night she has a crazy dream. She sees the goose who ate her manuscript. She sees the Candy Cane Killer getting married before she does. She sees Salma Hayek as Frida Kahlo having crazy sex with Dallas Dasher at the timestamp of 1 hour 33 minutes and 23 seconds, as a 15 second clip on Mr Skin dot com. She wakes up in a cold sweat, covered in a bunch of cans and bottles.]

HOLLY: Heavens to Betsy! I've got to get moving! I need to save Olive Oyl! Wait no... I gotta go to the Christmas Lizard ceremony! Wait... No! I have a dentist appointment first! I'm just going to stand up real quick. I hope I'm not hungover—

[HOLLY stands up quickly and immediately begins throwing up directly onto her Burnett's Vodka Branded T-Shirt that says 'I Drank The Whole Thing At Susie Debford's Sweet Sixteen'.]

HOLLY: Doesn't mean I'm hungover... that could just mean I'm regular old sick. Let me check that out and just smell this Vodka here...

[HOLLY cracks open a new bottle of Burnett's Buffalo Wing-flavored Vodka and immediately starts throwing up on her Burnett's Vodka Hockey Jersey where the number is 99 and the name is 'BOTTLES DRANK'.]

HOLLY: My dentist is going to be so mad... That I drank a whole fifth of Menthol Vodka without him. Better bring him a bottle.

[HOLLY gets behind the wheel of her dad's green-and-red Ford F-150 Raptor and immediately reverses into a recycling bin, and the rapping Santa jumps out of the way. Her BAC is like .3, but it doesn't matter 'cause this isn't her first rodeo. This is a small town where the police would just tell her to get home safely anyway, even if she'd just crashed into a cafe or killed a beloved horse or something. Anyway she pulls up to the dentist's office and crashes through the window. She goes flying through the windshield into the dentist's chair.]

HOLLY: Dr. Tannenbaum!

TANNENBAUM: Ah, right on time Holly. You smell like an unfinished basement. Have you been hitting the bottle harder than usual?

HOLLY: Guilty as charged! But you KNOW I didn't forget to bring you a bottle of Burnette's Chicken Tikka Masala Vodka!

TANNENBAUM: My favorite! The chicken flavor makes it so you don't need to have dinner.

HOLLY: Anyway, I don't have much time, I gotta get to the Christmas Lizard celebration.

TANNENBAUM: Christmas, ey? I thought you hated it. But if you're in the holiday spirit, can I interest you in bleaching your teeth red and green? How about some Season's Cheers veneers?

HOLLY: I don't know, Dr. Tannenbaum. Lately I've been thinking about a lot of things, like balancing my career with my love life and balancing both of those things with my drinking. Also, this Christmas stuff, I don't know if you know about this, but I have some really complicated issues going on emotionally with Christmas. For instance, I used to live in New York. Now I live here.

TANNENBAUM: Now now Holly, I have the perfect medicine for all that. Gatorade Purple Grape fluoride rinse.

HOLLY: Maybe life is more than just LOVE and PURPOSE, and FAMILY. It's also about drinking a bunch of alcohol all the time and pretending it's medicine. Maybe that's the true meaning of Christmas.

TANNENBAUM: I hooked up an IV for you, to help you sober up. I made your teeth green and red. Just kidding. They're just as yellow as when you arrived. I also gave your hair highlights. You're all good to go!

HOLLY: Thank you Dr. Tannenbaum. I was a mess. I'm so glad you fixed my hair and blood and stuff. Now if you don't mind, I'm gonna go be a journalist. I gotta see a man about a lizard. You can put the bill on my tab!

TANNENBAUM: Good luck, Holly. Oh, and one more thing.

HOLLY: What's that, Dr. Tannenbaum?

TANNENBAUM: I'm just like, a dentist. You keep having me do your hair and you tell me all your problems all the time and stuff, but I'm literally just a dentist. I could see if I'm like, a family friend or something, but I'm not really. I'm just your dentist. So, maybe next time I just clean your teeth and you just get the fuck out of here, alright?

HOLLY: Look Dr. Tannenbaum. You're like the dad I never had. On Christmas. The one day a year my dad would vanish...

TANNENBAUM: I can already see that you have more to say and you're just going to keep talking, so I'm going to go ahead and take a big sniff of nitrous and take the rest of the day off.

[DR. TANNENBAUM lays down in his dentist chair and takes a big sniff of gas out of his big mask and his eyes instantly glaze over. He turns on the TV and starts watching Shaqtin' A Fool. He laughs so hard that car alarms start going off outside, a bunch of deer scamper off into the woods, and at a nearby bar, a barfly's baseball cap goes flying up into the air and lands on his head backward.]

[HOLLY jumps back through the hole in her windshield and starts driving like 95 miles an hour toward the Christmas Plaza where the lizard will soon be presented. Before reaching the plaza she parks outside Jingle Bell Coffee, when she notices a man with suspicious curved shoes.]

HOLLY: That's him! That's the candy cane killer! HEY YOU!!!!!! FUCK YOU!!!!!! Asshole!! KILLER!!!

[HOLLY starts honking her horn over and over, pounding the steering wheel.]

HOLLY: Grab him!! Kill him!!

[Two guys on the sidewalk grab each other and immediately start fighting. The Candy Cane Killer, a generically evil looking man with all the evil traits like arched eyebrows and a mustache and vaguely ethnic features, scampers away during the turmoil.]

KILLER: Nyehehehehe! You'll never catch me!

[The shadowy figure fires three shots at HOLLY—the first one goes right through where the windshield would have been if she didn't shatter it earlier. The second goes through the Maraschino cherry jar in her driver's-side cup holder. And the third shatters her Martini Buzz Ball which she's holding daintily in her right hand.]

HOLLY: That was my last Buzz Ball. Now it's personal.

[She reaches into her purse and pulls out her Glock .17. She starts firing wantonly all over the place, but the gun isn't loaded and it's just going click, click, click.]

KILLER: Looks like it's time for ME to escape! Ta da!

HOLLY: He's getting away!

[She keeps pulling the trigger and honking her horn again and again, to no avail. Just then, Dallas Dasher walks out of the cafe to see what's up with all the commotion.]

DALLAS: Is everything OK? It smells like someone dropped a Buzz Ball out here.

HOLLY: I'm hot on the trail of the Candy Cane Killer, but he ran away really fast and I'm sort of tired. Also, my car horn is out of the shit that makes it honk, so now it sounds all fucked up and DUMB!

DALLAS: You'll have to buy some car horn shit yourself. I've already sacrificed enough for you. I'm not gonna miss the Christmas Lizard for you too. I can't help you. I'm just a guy with perfect abs who wanted to give you everything. I'm sorry it didn't work out.

HOLLY: Do you know how to replace a windshield? Or can you get me some wholesale Buzz Balls by saying they're for your dumb cafe or whatever?

DALLAS: Do you know how to repair a broken heart?

HOLLY: You can have some of my Buzz Balls once you buy them for me.

DALLAS: What's a Buzz Ball?

HOLLY: They're little alcoholic spheres that get you fucked up.

DALLAS: Spheres? Like... Christmas ornaments?

HOLLY: Huh. Yeah. I guess like Christmas Ornaments.

DALLAS: So I guess you don't hate EVERYTHING about Christmas then?

HOLLY: Yeah I mean if there's an ornament I can get fucked up off of, I'm good. Look. I'll drive you to the Christmas Plaza. I've gotta go there anyway to report on it.

DALLAS: Well, alright. I'm a little worried that your BAC is higher than my high school GPA, which was 0.4. Like I'm a hot guy so what did you expect? But. I trust your drunk driving skills.

HOLLY: I'm sorry for how I was acting 30 seconds ago. I guess it's because a Christmas-themed serial killer just shot a Buzz Ball out of my hand while I was drinking and driving? I'm so quirky sometimes haha!

DALLAS: No, no. I like that about you. Your uncontrollable alcoholism and poor judgment. For some reason I find it really charming because of how blonde you are. And did your dentist give you highlights? Looks good!

HOLLY: Aw. That's sweet. I have a similar feeling about you. I don't worry about how dumb and boring and common you are because you're super duper hot and handsome and you have a body like a Greek statue but with a normal sized dick. Also you smell like a big cup of hot chocolate filled with cologne.

DALLAS: Maybe someday we can make babies together that smell like hot chocolate and cologne.

HOLLY: And Buzz Balls?

DALLAS: And Buzz Balls. Now come on. Let's see what the Christmas Lizard is up to on this very merry, jolly afternoon.

HOLLY: And hey... Dallas?

DALLAS: Yeah?

HOLLY: Merry Christmas.

DALLAS: That's fine. I've been saying that the whole time and you thought it sucked but now it's cool when you say it. That's fine to me. That doesn't bother me. Cmon, let's hurry to the Christmas Plaza. We got to pet the Christmas Lizard before he gets cold.

HOLLY: OK here we are at the plaza! Wow, the line's long. I better interview some people while we wait. Hey, it's my boss, Blitzen Comet. Hey Blitzen, want to do an interview for the paper?

BLITZEN: Are you stupid? I work for the paper, I could just interview myself. Go talk to some of these no-name bozos standing in line. You know. Normal people—DUMB people? People who don't have names in the script. Simple people, like the kind of guys who'd hold a pitchfork if he's a farmer, or have on a hard hat if he's a construction worker... I don't wanna do your job for you.

HOLLY: Well HE'S on the rag. You know—like a shitty newspaper? That's pretty good. Do you think that's good Dallas?

DALLAS: Hey, look over there!

HOLLY: It's some kind of lizard!

DALLAS: No, the shoes. Look at the shoes this guy is wearing. Curled. Kind of remind me of what you said earlier, about the clue. The clue for the candy cane killer's identity. His shoes. Apparently he had on some shoes like that, you said? Anyway, this guy has the same shoes. Maybe he's the same guy? Anyway, he's walking over to the Christmas Lizard with a big candy cane. I wonder what he wants.

HOLLY: The lizard!? But he kills spinsters like me! I mean, my eggs are so dried up they might as well be served at a Las Vegas breakfast buffet. He should be attacking ME!

DALLAS: I just remembered... The Christmas Lizard this year... She has no mate. She's a single woman... She's like 7 years old, which I think is old for a lizard!

[The camera zooms in on the Christmas Lizard as we see the creepy and nasty Candy Cane Killer approaching menacingly. The camera rests on the Christmas Lizard's face and we see that it is wearing fake eyelashes and has ruby red lipstick on.]

HOLLY: (Yelling) That's him! That Candy Cane Killer! Stop him!

DALLAS (grimly): I thought this might happen. That's why I came prepared.

[DALLAS whips out a three foot tall Nutcracker, grabs the jaw, and cocks it like a gun [sfx]. DALLAS runs so fast that the wind rips his sweater off. He moves in hyper sexual slow motion as he flies forward. He is running so fast that his feet are kicking his own butt as he runs and also his Timbs fly off into the air and he leaps toward the Candy Cane Killer, who reveals himself to the Christmas Lizard and brandishes his evil sharpened candy cane high in the air. As the Christmas Lizard looks on in terror, mascara running down her face, Dallas' nutcracker intercepts the sharpened candy cane just in time. The mouth of the nutcracker crunches down on the murder instrument, shattering it into a million little pieces.]

DALLAS: I'm going to treat your ears like the Halls. And deck them.

KILLER: Dickhead! Shit head! Fucker!

DALLAS: Sorry, Candy Cane Killer, who I now realize is Craig who works at the quirky small-town video store. Nice try Craig. Dumbass. Can't be a serial killer in a small town, idiot. Got you. But I'm afraid that I cannot let you go around town and keep killing spinsters. Because I'm in love with one of those very spinsters you hate so much. And yeah, she may have forced her gynecologist into early retirement, and yeah, one time she fell asleep in the bathtub for soooo long that she almost died, but I love her. I love her.

HOLLY: Dallas! You—you love me?

DALLAS: I'm talking here, honey. Can't you see I'm in the middle of my thing? I don't care if you hate Christmas, I don't care if you're constantly drunk on Buzz Balls and Veal Parmesan flavored Vodka. I don't care that you dress like Lloyd Banks... For this Christmas, all I REALLY want—is you.

HOLLY: Oh Dallas, I—

[Just then, Santa Claus whips around the corner doing 150 in his sleigh, knocking over mailboxes and shit, and he stops right in front of Dallas and Holly.]

DAD: HO HO HO! I just finished my shift and came here as quickly as I could! I'm so happy to hear my spinster daughter has FINALLY found a romance partner! But we're getting ahead of ourselves. I think we have a Christmas-themed serial killer to dispose of.

[Santa Claus grabs the Candy Cane Killer by the scruff of the neck and starts banging his head against the side of Mazda Miata. He stops for a second, and kind of looks around to see if everyone approves of what he is doing, and everyone seems pretty cool with it. So he drags him over to a nearby squad car and, with the door open, bashes his head super hard into the top of the roof as he tosses his limp body and slams the door shut. He smiles really big for the crowd, and then looks into the squad car and realizes that the guy has a huge gash in the side of his head that is bleeding super badly. He opens the door to throw a towel onto the Killer's head and shuts it again.]

DAD: Hey you, copper. I think I got a little excited so don't bring this guy into the station. Bring his body to the North Pole where he'll never bother anyone again. You've wielded your last candy cane, you son of a bitch. Man that felt good. What a rush.

HOLLY: Dad, that was amazing! But—But—You're Santa!? How come you never told me?

DAD: I thought you would think I was cool if I was a really aloof deadbeat dad. Like if I was never around on Christmas, you know? Like I thought that was mysterious and you would respect me. Better than being lame ass Santa who brings dumb toys to babies.

HOLLY: Deadbeat dads ARE kind of cool. But I didn't need a deadbeat dad. I needed a Santa Claus dad. And you weren't there for me.

DAD: Yeah but I'm here now, so...

HOLLY: OK well I guess I can instantly forgive you now that I'm starting to like Christmas.

DALLAS: Oh really? So... Any room in your loopy spinster heart for a Christmas guy?

HOLLY: Yeah. I think I'm finally starting to see what Christmas is all about.

DALLAS: Really? You got into the Christmas Spirit because you witnessed a hate-crime assassination targeting a spinster lizard?

HOLLY: No, not that. That!

[HOLLY points to the crowd that has gathered to see the Christmas Lizard. The Christmas Lizard is currently singing Oh Tannenbaum for the crowd. It's actually not the Christmas Song, it's a song written about the town dentist, Dr. Tannenbaum. Anyway, in the crowd there is a young girl holding a christmas globe, smiling.]

HOLLY: Look at that little girl, holding that Christmas snow Globe. If I squint, well, this feels silly to say, but if you squint the globe looks exactly like a Buzz Ball. That's all Christmas is, you know? It's like the tree is this great big tall buzz ball, the snow is a bunch of little Buzz Balls, and

hell, it's kind of like our whole big world is one great big Buzz Ball that we all get to live on and drink from. It's all just Buzz Balls. All my Christmas gifts are Buzz Balls. You're a Buzz Ball. And now we get to gather around the big Buzz Ball tree and watch a bunch of people who look like Buzz Balls hold Buzz Balls and we all get to drink as many Buzz Balls as we want all day long. Thank you, Dallas. Thank you for showing me that Christmas is just one great big Buzz Ball of a day.

DAD: Dallas Dasher, you're on my nice list. Unlike that evil Candy Cane Killer. The only thing he's getting for Christmas is some silver handcuffs.

DALLAS: Wait up. That's not the only jewelry making an appearance in this Yuletide event. Mrs. Silverbell-Claus, do I have permission to marry your daughter? How about you Santa? And do I have permission to give you grandkids right away?

MOM: Yeah I think that sounds dope to me.

DAD: That's wassup!

HOLLY: Hold on—do I even get a say in this?

RILEY: Ruff Ruff Ruff!

DALLAS: Hey who's that?

HOLLY: It's Riley the Christmas Dog!

RILEY: Ruff Ruff! Just kidding—I can talk English! And I'm here to wish you a very merry Christmas, and to say that I also approve of this Christmas Day Matrimony!

HOLLY: Thanks Riley!

DAD: That loveable Yuletide pooch is practically a hero in this town! He can speak English whenever he wants, but he chooses only to speak on Christmas! That's how much he loves it!

RILEY: Ruff ruff! That's right Santa!

DALLAS: What do you say Holly? Will you be mine? In Holy Matrimony?

HOLLY: Well, with me—it's going to be more like HOLLY matrimony.

[Everyone laughs, even the Candy Cane Killer who is bleeding so bad it's pouring out of the back door of the cop car into the gutter.]



DALLAS: I spent 15 years of salary on this amazing ring! It's your Christmas present—and your wedding ring!

HOLLY: That's crazy, obviously I am saying yes. But uhhh... For your Christmas present... Well...

[HOLLY starts panicking and rummaging through her purse—she didn't even think to get Dallas anything! The only useful thing she can find is a ratty old pencil.]

HOLLY: I think... I think I'm ready to give up this special pencil. It was my Thanksgiving Pencil... But I think I'm ready for... A Christmas pencil.

[DALLAS eagerly accepts the pencil and starts crying.]

DALLAS: What the fuck are you talking about? In any case, it's perfect. This is the best day of my life! AAAAGGGHHH!!! I love you so fucking much!

[DALLAS DASHER punches the Mazda Miata super hard, putting a visible dent in it and getting the Candy Cane Killer's blood all over his hand. Meanwhile, we see the Candy Cane Killer in the back seat of the squad car, barely conscious.]

KILLER: Ugghh... I would have gotten away with it... If it wasn't for that meddling spinster!

[HOLLY holds up her engagement ring at the killer.]

HOLLY: Not anymore!

KILLER: I meant the lizard. Who are you?

[SANTA reaches back and punches the Killer so hard that a bunch of bloody teeth go flying through the front windshield. The Killer immediately stops moving and slumps over onto the floor.]

SANTA: See you in hell, bastard. I go to hell pretty often because I get my coal from there.

HOLLY: Everyone listen up! I have a new idea for a novel called the Christmas Pencil! And it's allllllll about ME!!! And my life!!! It's kind of a reclamation of my failed novel, the Thanksgiving Pencil. I sort of learned a lot of lessons in the last hour or so, and it's basically me looking back at my amazing life and the meaning of this thing we call Christmas.

RILEY: Ruff ruff! This is a perfect Christmas! But it's still missing one thing...

HOLLY: An original Christmas song that I just wrote? I love Christmas so much now, that this one just came to me!

VIXEN: Hey, what's up. I've been here the whole time too. I saw the whole thing. Vixen. Vixen Something. Something Christmasy.

BLITZEN: Remember me? I'm your boss Blitzen Comet. Why didn't you tell me your friend Vixen was so hot?

[BLITZEN reaches down and grabs VIXEN's ass in front of everyone in a really weird and possessive way.]

HOLLY: Boss, come on, she's married!

BLITZEN: Hey, well, I'm not going to be caught dead with some dusty old spinster! I'm not Dallas Dasher!

HOLLY: Stop it! Let's focus on my thing! A magical yuletide carol! Let's just sing it now before I don't want to anymore! It goes a little something like this...

### **I Would Kill for Christmas**

#### INTRO

C            Am        C  
I used to be a cynic, I admit it  
C                            Am            C  
When it came to Christmas I could not commit  
          F                            C  
But it's so much fun when the tree is lit  
F  
Everyone on Earth should be  
C        G        G7  
forced to do it

#### CHORUS

C            F            C        F  
Some people want a mistletoe kiss  
          G            F            C  
But I would kill for Christmas  
C            F                    C        F  
Nothing quite brings me yuletide bliss  
G            Am                    C        F

Like sending Grinches to the abyss

G F

Yes I would kill for Christmas

G C

I would kill for Christmas

## BRIDGE

E A E A

Enemies gather around like Vipers

E A E A

They will meet the Christmas Sniper

E7 A7

Nonbelievers pay the piper

F G7

While my rifle's going hyper

## VERSE

C F C F

We must spread Christmas to everyone

G F C F

Either by choice or the barrel of a gun

C F C F

If you hate Christmas, there can be no truce

G Am C G

Those christmas lights make for a nice noose

## CHORUS

C F C F

Some people want a mistletoe kiss

G F C

But I would kill for Christmas

C F C F

Nothing quite brings me yuletide bliss

G Am C F

Like sending Grinches to the abyss

G F

Yes I would kill for Christmas

G C

I would kill for Christmas

### BRIDGE

E A E A  
In the evening we'll help Dad and Mom  
E A E A  
Loading the rifles with Aplomb  
E7 A7  
Filling stockings up with Napalm  
F G7  
Let the children touch the Christmas Bomb

### VERSE

C F C F  
The Christmas SWAT team is overjoyed  
G F C F  
As they load up their rifles and prepare to deploy  
C F C F  
The elves are all happy to be employed  
G Am C G  
But if they resist they will be destroyed

### CHORUS

C F C F  
Some people want a mistletoe kiss  
G F C  
But I would kill for Christmas  
C F C F  
Nothing quite brings me yuletide bliss  
G Am C F  
Like sending Grinches to the abyss  
G F  
Yes I would kill for Christmas  
G C  
I would kill for Christmas